

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT TO THE BRONX COMMUNITY COLLEGE COMMUNITY NOVEMBER 2016**

I want to wish everyone a happy mid-semester. We're rounding the corner towards the close of this Fall 2016 semester and there is a lot of exciting news to share. Bronx Community College continues to thrive. As I celebrate my fifteenth month of service, I pause to reflect on all of the positive movement we are experiencing as an institution. The following are some of the highlights from the month of November.

**COLLEGE FORUMS:** After recent reports of heightened stress, anxiety, and strain among the student, faculty, and staff, I hosted a College Forum on Monday, November 14, 2016. Many amid us continue to experience anxiety and stress-related trouble with coping. Staff in the Office of Personal Counseling are available to talk to any students who may need assistance. For faculty and staff, the Department of Human Resources can provide information on our Employee Assistance Programs. Anyone having immigration-related questions can reach out by phone to 212-652-2055, refer to the website <http://www1.cuny.edu/sites/citizenship-now/>, or email [info@cuny.edu](mailto:info@cuny.edu). Bronx Community College, in our ongoing effort to support and demonstrate respect, integrity, engagement, excellence, and empowerment, is here to support all members of our diverse community.

Given the success of November 14<sup>th</sup> Forum, I hosted a second Open Forum on Tuesday, November 29, 2016, to hear any concerns or feedback from students, faculty, and staff. It was a productive meeting and I plan to host additional open forums in the future.

**NOVEMBER EVENTS:** On Thursday, November 3, 2016, BCC and the Student Government Association welcomed Chancellor James B. Milliken and a number of elected officials to campus to celebrate the Ribbon Cutting for the Quad and to kickoff CUNY Month. I could not have been more proud to see all of you outside (despite the rain) celebrating this proud moment together. On Tuesday, November 15, 2016, we celebrated another BCC milestone with the Ribbon Cutting for the BCC Food Pantry located on the first floor of Loew Hall. This is the first of many initiatives planned to improve the quality of life, health, and education for our students and their families. Please consider donating non-perishables or making a financial contribution. Combating hunger is an extremely important way to help our students persist towards graduation.

On Monday, November 21, 2016, CUNY Board of Trustee Member Fernando Ferrer visited BCC and met with several students and engaged in a meaningful discussion. The meeting is one in a series of anticipated visits by Trustees to the campus over the upcoming months to learn more about the college.

**DIVISION OF ACADEMIC & STUDENT SUCCESS:** Registration for the Spring 2017 semester is underway. As of November 14, 2016, we have already enrolled 2,710 continuing students. This lags far behind where we were this time last year when we had enrolled 3,695 continuing students. I am asking all faculty to take time at the beginning or end of their classes to encourage students to register for Spring 2017. They do not need to put money down to register.

**RESPONDING TO ITEMS OF CONCERN:** Over the Fall 2016 semester, members of senior administration met twice with members of the senior leadership of the BCC Chapter of the

Professional Staff Congress. In October, members of the PSC gathered to identify areas for improvement of BCC facilities. The following improvements have been made since the first meeting:

- *Bliss Hall – Stairway to Roof Peeling Paint:* PPS Painters scraped, plastered, and repaired the area.
- *Meister Hall – Ground Level Entrance Tiles Missing:* Worn tiles were removed, the floor was leveled, and new linoleum tile installed.
- *Meister 601 – Leak from Upper Floor Equipment Failure:* Equipment on an upper floor failed, causing a leak. The repair has been completed and the leak has been fixed.
- *Bliss Hall Ceiling Tiles:* Broken ceiling tiles were replaced.
- *Bliss Hall Stained and Damaged Ceiling Tiles:* Ceiling tiles which were water damaged, stained, or unsightly were replaced and all water damage was remediated.
- *Meister 601 – Beam Paint Peeling Off:* Moisture near beams caused discoloration and staining. PPS has scraped and painted the areas.
- *Meister 622A – Damaged and Misaligned Ceiling Tiles:* Damaged and missing tiles were replaced.

Concerns were also raised about the safety of the drinking water on campus. To ensure that high quality water is available to anyone on BCC's campus, we have installed water filtration dispensers. BCC also conducts samples of the water that comes from those dispensers. In 2016, the Division of Administration & Finance introduced proactive probe sampling and added hazard inspections to our Public Safety rounds. Public Safety makes alerts if there is standing or pooling water, or if water filter lights signal that a filter requires changing. The recent probe samples conducted across campus by an independent firm found all water samples within acceptable limits and in accordance with US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and US Department of Health (DOH) guidelines. Please note that filters are changed more frequently with higher use of water dispensers. An older filter date does not indicate that the dispenser is unattended to. It indicates that the filter has not been used enough to cause clogging. Once a filter requires changing, the dispenser will automatically stop providing any water until it has been changed.

**DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE:** As part of the ongoing ASAP Expansion, BCC has received \$822K to begin renovation on Nichols Hall 4<sup>th</sup> Floor. Work will be performed by our very own BCC Skilled Trades Team and we appreciate the campus community support as we continue with this important initiative. This one of many construction projects on BCC's Capital Plan.

I would like to provide special thanks to the team in Physical Plant Services for working diligently to bring all three of our campus boilers online for the heating seasons despite unforeseen obstacles and challenges. Please continue to let Administration & Finance know if your work or teaching areas are overly hot or cold.

**DIVISION OF ADVANCEMENT, COMMUNICATIONS & EXTERNAL RELATIONS:** On Tuesday, November 29, 2016, BCC took part in Giving Tuesday, a global day of philanthropy. For five

years, this day has been observed the Tuesday after Thanksgiving in response to the commercialism of holiday season and as a reminder to give back and be thankful. \$18,769 in contributions were received on Giving Tuesday and will support the Help a Bronco Graduate scholarship fund and student emergency assistance efforts, including the newly-opened BCC

Food Pantry. All contributions made to BCC through #CUNYTuesday are being counted towards BCC's CUNY Campaign goals. As campaign season continues, please give. It can make all the difference in the world to our students.

I am pleased to announce a number of new grants awarded to BCC:

- Three-year \$300,000 renewable grant from the Carroll and Milton Petrie Foundation to support the Petrie Student Emergency Grant Fund.
- \$145,975 per year for five years awarded by the Capital One Foundation in support of a 30-credit Cyber Security and Networking Non-credit to Credit Training Program (in collaboration with industry experts and CBO partners, including *Per Scholas*).
- \$200,000 awarded by the Thompson Foundation to support the preparation of an existing conditions report for Gould Memorial Library.
- \$55,000 awarded by ConEdison, Inc. to support BCC's ConEdison STEM Endowed Scholarship.
- \$25,000 awarded for a Network Security Program in Business and Industry Solutions to Dr. Ruby Chua of the Division of Workforce & Economic Development.
- \$24,429 awarded for preparing the future Medical Laboratory Technicians to Dr. Diane Price in the Biology Department.

**NEW TECHNOLOGY:** In an effort to better serve our students, Waitlist is now open. Students who attempt to register for a course that has already met capacity will be placed on a waitlist and automatically enrolled if a spot becomes available or if a new section is opened.

BCC's website redesign and rebranding initiative is ongoing. The chosen vendor, EFK, has been meeting with this initiative's co-chairs, Diane Weathers and Loïc Audusseau, and a ten-person internal steering committee of representatives from various academic and administrative departments. The project is expected to be completed over the next six to eight months, and during this time, all campus departments will receive regular updates. Wide feedback will be solicited and is welcomed.

This week, BCC began the technical phase of the Starfish Enterprise System project. Project Manager Francisco "Javier" Legassa and Technical Project Manager Deira Pereyra may be reaching out to you for feedback and assistance during this phase as they prepare for installation. In line with this initiative to introduce new and helpful IT resources, I would like to encourage you to explore and use LISTSERV, an excellent platform to develop communities of interest through open or targeted emails, mailing lists, online forums, and newsletters.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:** From Wednesday, December 7, 2016, until Friday, December 9, 2016, a group of BCC faculty and staff will be attending the 2016 Annual Conference of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. This conference is important for information gathering in preparation for BCC's 2018-2019 accreditation review. You will be hearing more over the upcoming weeks and months about this process and how you can participate. We will all have to work together for successful re-accreditation.

The Annual holiday performance of Handel's Messiah will be held at BCC on Sunday, December 11, 2016, at 3pm. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. Children and BCC students with ID are free with advanced registration. Tickets are available on the BCC website.

The performance will feature the Bronx Opera Chorus and the Orchestra of the Bronx, along with special readings from members of the Bronx Community and many local civic leaders.

As an update on our Government Relations activities, December 1, 2016, is the upcoming CUNY Legislative Action Committee Conference, at which time the University will set forth its budget priorities for FY18. Also upcoming on December 16, 2016, the three Bronx-based CUNY Colleges will be meeting with the Bronx Delegation of the State Assembly to begin advocating for the University's FY18 budget requests.

We want to hear about your good work and exciting projects! If you are involved in any BCC projects or activities that you would like shared with the campus community in upcoming President's Reports, please email Deputy to the President, Karla Renee Williams, at [karla.williams@bcc.cuny.edu](mailto:karla.williams@bcc.cuny.edu). I look forward to working with each of you in the **Year of the Student** throughout the 2016-2017 academic year.

Best wishes,

Thomas A. Isekenegbe, Ph.D.